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THE "MUST" OF LOVE.

The "Must" of Love;

OR,

LOVE'S COMPELLING CALL.

AN I. A. H. LETTER

BY

DAVID C. COOK.

CHICAGO:
DAVID C COOK PUBLISHING COMPANY,
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The "Must" of Love;

OR, LOVE'S COMPELLING CALL.

DEAR FRIEND:

I WOULD like to make this letter to you a short and joyous sermon. My text contains only two words, but I believe them to be the sweetest two words that human ear ever heard. They are: "Thou shalt." It is the old way of saying *you must.*

I presume you do not at all like "must," but I want to tell you that everything depends upon how, or where, the "must" is used. Some words are sweet or bitter, according as they are employed.

The word "must" is generally used in trying to compel one to do something

that he dislikes; but sometimes it is employed to encourage a person to attempt what he wishes to do but fears he cannot, and then it is quite different.

Suppose some great person was about to hold a grand reception in your town. You heard about it, and knew it would be a delightful affair. It would be the joy of your life to attend, but you had not been invited. Perhaps you had reason to believe you would not receive an invitation, either because you were not acquainted with the person giving the reception, or did not think your social standing sufficiently high, or fancied you had given offense in some way. Then if you should receive through the mail a formal printed invitation, you might think it was a mistake—that it was not intended for you. But if it was a written

one, and bore your name at the head, it would delight you; and the more strongly the letter was worded, the more it would interest you. If it said, "You *must* come, for we need you to complete the joy of the occasion," I am sure you would think all the more of it.

Of course you know what follows the two words of my text: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength" (Mark 12: 30). There are many sorts of invitations, but none so attractive as an invitation to love. And this is the strongest possible one of that kind, for it is an invitation to love with all your being. It shows you how the One who gives it feels. To love with all your being must mean to be happy with all your being.

This invitation is called a commandment. The words were first spoken by God to Moses, and he was to tell them to the Jews as God's message to them. Afterwards when Jesus was asked by some of the Jews what was the greatest commandment of their law, He repeated this one, saying it was the greatest of all.

Is not this a strange sort of commandment? Think for a minute. You are accustomed to having persons bid you do things that you do not wish to, but this is an injunction to do something you naturally most wish to do. But it is truly like all of God's commandments. God is love, and Love's commandments are the opposite of those to which we are accustomed. People misunderstand God's commands because they misunder-

stand His loving nature; they misunderstand His nature because it is so unlike what their own seems to be.

People will never love because you say they must. You cannot compel another to love you, and you cannot make yourself love any one; yet you never love except as you feel that you must.

True love always calls for love in return. The heart must respond when it knows that true love is calling it. This it cannot help doing. Love does not consider the person; it thinks of the heart alone, for *the heart is the real person.* But we are apt to judge ourselves unworthy of true love. We may either think that the love is not genuine, or that there is some mistake about it.

If you do not believe that true love always calls for love in return, it is because

you do not understand what I mean by the word. Much of so-called "love" is not love at all, for it cares for another only that it may secure some good for itself. Some try to secure the love of others rather than to give their own. An honest person cannot want another's love except in exchange for his own. He can care for another only as he wants to bless that other. Do you know that love has been defined as "the desire to bless"?

God can have no selfish thought in desiring your love. That is not real love which wants another's love for what it will bring to himself. To want something selfishly is not love, but rather what we call an appetite. Why should God want the love of your whole being? It is only that He may bless your whole being. If God did not love you with all His being,

He could not want you to love Him in that way. The love of the Infinite One must be far deeper than yours can be. It is all yours, for love cannot be divided. As the sun shines for each one, and as though for only one, so is all of His love yours, as if you were the only human being in His universe, if you will receive it thus.

God could not wish your love or invite it except as He loves you. Only so far as one truly loves is it possible for him to desire another's true love. To draw out the love of your whole being toward God, you will need to see that He loves you with all His being. The love of your whole being is as much to you as the love of His whole being is to Him. God cannot and does not ask what He does not give. They are brutes who, in the guise of

Love, seek to win love without loving. All expect love from one who asks love, and we have a right to do so. Remember that it is God who comes seeking your love.

Now if God had said, "It is best for you to love me," you might have thought He did not care much about it; but when He says, "You *must* love me, and love me with all your nature," you can surely know that at heart He thus loves you. You can know, too, that He must have your love, if there is any way in which He can cause you to see His love so plainly that you cannot do other than give Him yours in return. When you understand this you see how He would even die to win your heart's love, and yet would leave you free so that you might give this to Him freely

and gladly, because only so could you give it truly. Love that is given under compulsion is not love, except when compelled by love.

Do not say, "I fear this love is not for me, for I have refused it." The love of God cannot be changed or limited by anything you have done. It is only as you hide yourself from it, refusing to see or respond to it, that such love fails to be yours.

You can refuse to believe that God loves you, and while you continue to do so nothing can bring you to love Him. But if you believe and respond, nothing can separate you from His love. You cannot blot out the love of God from your sky, any more than you can blot out God Himself. You can shut yourself up in the dark if you choose, but as the

sun shines each day, so does God's love stream out for you, for He *is* love. You can remain in the dark until frozen and dead, or you may step out into the sunshine where you will find light and warmth. To be away from Him is to be unhappy. While you remain away, you are ever losing, and such loss is eternal.

God wants your love regardless of who you are. It is *you* He loves. He can help you only as He can draw you to Himself in love. True love makes one intensely sympathetic. If only you could know the anguish and suffering in the heart of God for those away from Him, you would never say, "He cannot love me."

It does not seem to me there could be any doubt as to our loving God with all our being if only we knew He loved us

in that way, for a life all-love is a life of fruition. People are dying for want of love. Why do they not seek His love?

Beneath the ground in many parts of the Western States are great coal-beds. They were there when these States were first settled. The forests were scarce—much more so than at the present time. There was great need of fuel, and the lack of it caused much suffering. Men noticed indications of coal, and the attention of the settlers was called to this again and again by scientists; they said, "If you seek you will find." But the loose pieces upon the surface were not good coal. Scientific men explained that these had become mixed with the soil and affected by exposure to the air, and they believed that the coal in the ground would be good. But some of the

people said, "What if it is worse?" They were skeptical. By and by certain ones were persuaded to "try their luck." This required labor, time and money. They dug wells, they tunneled hills; they met with many discouragements and failures; they were laughed at and joked about, they were pitied and despised by their neighbors. But some kept on until success was certain. Now, the people all wanted coal, those who laughed as well as those who labored and sought for it, and God wanted them to have it. But only those who actually sought found it.

A person once wrote to me saying, "I think God must be very selfish to require all of my love." But I am sure He is most unselfish in this requirement. Do you not see that you need some one

whom you can love, far more than some one to love you? It is the emotion of love in your own heart that makes you happy. If you knew that a person loved you, but there was no response on your part, you would not receive a particle of happiness from it. Fullness of joy can come only from perfect loving. You will be full of joy if there is some one you can love with all your being. You can love with all your being one who is perfectly lovely.

One hears it said that man and woman were made for each other; that neither man's life nor woman's life alone is complete; that they begin to live truly when in love two hearts are made one. Far more true is this of God and you. I am sure you can think of no closer union than that to which He invites you.

Perhaps you think that you do not wish to love so intensely. It is from fear of too little love that many hesitate about marriage. None fear to marry lest the love may be too great. Love's bonds are never irksome, but marriage without love is. When vows take the place of love, and duty the place of joyous doing for one another, then is married life a bondage. So it is with you and God. Lack of love makes all the trouble.

Many a married pair live together without love, and in heart they are far apart. The law may still call them husband and wife, but in heart they are parted, for love is absent. They may even be farther apart than if separated by miles of land or sea, for living together under such circumstances serves

only to keep the hearts apart. It is the same in your union with God. This union ought to be all of love. If love is lacking it can never satisfy. Upon love's intensity depends your joy. The reason why there are so many unhappy, unchristian lives is because so many have never heard the "must" of love.

I would not say anything against married love. Such love may ever be sweet, if love to God is perfect; but it can never be what love between God and you may be. At its best it is not worthy of such comparison. It is as if you compared the borrowed moonlight with the resplendent glory of the sunshine, or a moment of time with eternity.

Sometimes circumstances blind one to the love of another, and then perhaps a

deep, true affection is not returned. When one is wealthy and the other poor, one of high social standing and the other obscure, it leads one to believe that the love of the other is not genuine. The heart says, "He does not mean it. He is mocking me. It is a passing fancy. He would soon tire of me," and so on. To win a bride of the people, one must himself be of the people.

Perhaps you remember the allegory of the prince in disguise who had seen a peasant maiden and become charmed with her beauty and loveliness, the sweetness of her voice, the simple and natural grace of her manners. Day after day the picture of her face came up before him instead of fading from his mind, until finally, in words the sweetest he could command, he wrote asking her

to be his princess. But he was refused. Chagrined, perplexed and disheartened, the more he dwelt upon it the more unhappy he became, until, as he lay awake one night, Wisdom in fairy form came to his relief. "It is because she cannot believe your love for her is true," she told the prince. "You must win her love by convincing her of your own." And now in a little hovel dwells, as a peasant, a prince in disguise, who toils the long day through, and at night rests on a bed of straw, while his food is the coarsest. But his heart is light, for the love of the peasant maiden is his. He has won his bride, his princess, by being one with her in her daily work and care. Can you believe me when I tell you that God is unchanged; that the same Jesus whom

men once saw clothed in human flesh still lives with us here?

Some are greatly prejudiced against God. They have not the faintest idea what His real heart is. A widower who married again had three children, a boy of eight, a girl of ten, and a young lady daughter, Helen. Step-mothers are not all hateful creatures—though some may be—but Helen believed they were, and taught this belief to her younger brother and sister, so the new mamma met with a rather cold reception. But resolves to hate her did not last long with the younger children. A few days after the mamma arrived Helen was much surprised at seeing her little sister warmly return a kiss from the step-mother. When alone with her she said, "Oh, May, how could you do it?" "I couldn't

help it," was the child's reply. "I have to love her, for she loves me." It must be even so with you when once you know God's love.

There will never be happy living until there is perfect loving. How tired you are! Yes, but don't you see that God can rest you only as in loving trust you will lay yourself on his bosom? The heart that has never truly loved has never been truly happy. The heart out of which love has never flowed has never been alive. But true love would make alive each dead heart. It would arouse true love in you. True love is most valuable, for it never changes. It lives forever, because it is a part of God.

I wish you could see how much God desires your love, and how complete He wishes it to be. He could not say "you

must love me thus" if He was not ready to do everything that His infinite love and wisdom can devise to bring you to thus love Him. The cross upon which Jesus hung at Calvary is an expression of the intensity of His love to-day.

Often have you heard the words "God is love," but unless you can arouse yourself to see something of what they mean, the other words, "You must love Him," will have little significance to you.

Forgive me, dear friend, if I seem to talk as though I felt myself better than you. I do not mean to. The more clearly I see the truth of what I am now saying, the more unworthy do I feel to speak upon the subject to others.

If only we believed that God is love, the Source and Fountain of love, it would change all things. But we think of Him

as everything except love, and so we try to satisfy ourselves with giving Him all else but love. Hearts are breaking for want of love to Him, but they do not realize what is the matter. Never can the heart be satisfied until there is perfect, loving union with God.

There is a Bible large enough for you and me in the three words, "God is love," if only we believed and acted upon them. True belief does this. One whose being is all love to you must command the love of all your being, when you recognize it. And why should not He who *is* Love, and whose creation you are, have your love?

Perhaps you have heard the story of the mother who took her baby to an oculist, to learn what was the matter with its eyes. They had never seemed

to be right. The child did not notice things as other babies did. Perhaps you can understand something of how she felt when the doctor said, "Madam, I am sorry I must tell you that your child is blind; he will never see." "Oh! Doctor, you do not mean it! Is there no help? My child! my baby! Will he never see the face of his mother? Oh, he must see, he must see! You must cure him, doctor."

Of all wretched imaginations of the heart, and teachings of those whose hearts are not right, is the idea that you cannot add to God's happiness. It is the worse because it completely cuts off all human relations with God. If I cannot add to His happiness, then I am sure I cannot subtract from it. If my life cannot affect Him, then He does not and

cannot care for me. To believe this is to believe that He is hatred, not love.

Some fail to see how God can suffer and yet be God. I believe it is godlike to suffer. Suffering and glory are closely linked together. God had to clothe Himself with flesh in order that we might see that He could suffer, that He did suffer, and does suffer. In Jesus' life we find a perfect picture of God's life, and He is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.

Do not think that you cannot bless God. With each love-thought that goes out to Him you bless Him. Does the child feel that it cannot bless its father and mother with its love because it cannot work for them, provide them with food and raiment, care for them when they are sick, or advise them in any way? Love consists not in special acts of help-

fulness. It is the devotion of one heart to another.

There are four ways in which God invites us to love Him completely—with the heart, soul, mind, and strength. Real love is of the heart, and if you love with all the heart, the rest follows. But the trouble is, many do not let their hearts control their actions. Some do not seem to have much heart left. You will find people trying to love God with all the heart, when their minds are so full of other things that they have no time for thoughts of love. Then there is a sort of head-love which some have. They feel it is the right thing to love Him. They say they do love Him, and they ask others to do so. They go regularly to church, they speak in prayer-meeting, and perhaps teach in the Sun-

day-school. They give to the poor and to other worthy causes. Yet they have little heart-love. Commonest of all are such as put no earnestness into loving God. Their strength is given to other things.

In order to come to love God with your whole being, you must see that you are not doing so now. I am sure that when one really loves Him he will know something about Him. Some are not even sure that there is a God. Did you ever love anyone so much that the person's face was always before you, that thoughts of that one entered into every thought of your life, that you felt perfectly happy when with him, and when away were ever looking forward to the next meeting? Do you, or did you ever, love God thus?

Perhaps you ask, "Can I love God as I love a human being? Is it not a different kind of love?" People are apt to divide love into love for parents, love for wife or husband, love for children, love for friends, and still another kind—love for God. But there are not various kinds of love, though it may differ in intensity. Love to God should be first, strongest and most intense; it should be the love in which all others grow.

Love to God is not different in nature from other love. God tries to attract our love to Him by representing Himself to us as a father, and as a brother, and as a bridegroom. Indeed, whatever form of love we know, He shows His readiness and wish to receive it.

Listen to these words of Jesus, spoken when He was told that His mother and

His brethren waited outside the door, desiring to speak to Him. He turned and said, as though to make plain to those about Him that He would gladly receive them in the most tender relationship: "Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother" (Mark 3: 35). As you come into love's most tender relationship with God you "do His will," for His will is love.

Some have thought that love to God is more like reverence. But reverence is not love, and may be given without it. The word "reverence" suggests fear—and "perfect love casteth out fear" (1 John 4: 18). Many seek to please God in some other way than by giving Him love. They give Him

respect in place of it, or perhaps try to give Him trust and faith without it.

Doing "the proper thing," or "the right thing," often takes the place of a religion of complete, joyous love. Sanctimonious, long-facedness, veneration (so-called), take the place of a life of love. Worship (the perfection of love) is conceived of as the spending so much time in going to church, making prayers, singing holy songs, and so on. People who do these things regularly (from force of habit perhaps) are sometimes held up to us as model Christians. The result is that many think of religion as a sad but at the same time a necessary thing. They say, "Oh, of course you are good, and I am not; but then, I have much the best time." Many times young people are advised to have

their fun and pleasure before becoming Christians.

There can be no other life so happy as one devoted to loving God, for there are none so lovable as He. But some people will work for God, live and die for Him, and yet not be happy, because they have never given Him love. I sometimes think that Satan cares very little about what people profess or do, so long as he can keep them from knowing the love of God and so from loving Him.

You do not get into the habit of loving, but rather into that of not loving. The habit-life is a mechanical one. Every bit of love is active; love is never passive. Habit-life is devoid of love; it does as a machine.

Intense love must find expression, but it is in freedom of action. Good actions

from habit are slavish; there is no heart in them.

If you are to love God you must see that He is the nearest of all to you. You cannot help loving most what seems truly the nearest. Perhaps you are saying, "My mother, father, brother, sister, husband or wife, or some friend, is the nearest one to me. I am all that he or she has—while God has so much to look after and think about that I cannot be much to Him." No one can be so near or so dear to you as God. It is impossible. No one can be so constantly with you, so completely enter into your every pleasure and every trouble, so rejoice with you and suffer with you, so cheer you, so rest and refresh you. And no one else so desires to.

Perhaps you say, "I do love Him."

Perfect love trusts perfectly. Is your life free from anxiety and worry? You cannot trust more than you love. You will trust Him or love Him only so far as you know His love.

There is a great difference between a life of love and one of struggling to do right. The two are as unlike as can be imagined. Love and law-keeping are often spoken of together by Jesus, but He connects them in a different way from what some do. He says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15); and again, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me" (John 14:21). The keeping of them shows that you are one who loves Him; without love the commandments are not truly kept. Outward keeping of them alone is but a sham.

As you love you keep them unconsciously.

The one who loves God with all his being lives regardless of law, yet keeps the law perfectly. Love is a law to him, and perfect love is perfect law. Have you never heard of "the perfect law of love"? It is said there are more than five hundred laws in Chicago for the breaking of which people are punished. I do not know any of these; I have never read them, nor found it necessary to do so in order to keep them. There are persons much interested in knowing these laws; they are such as are anxious, for selfish reasons, to break them and yet avoid punishment. You may give a person all the rules governing music, and yet he may not be able to sing, because he has no music in his soul. So

one may have a knowledge of all the laws of right and wrong, yet not be able to keep any of them truly, because a love for keeping them is wanting.

The Bible says much about obedience, but there are several kinds. One you dislike; obedience to force—or what you think is forced obedience—you never like. Then there is obedience to a sort of self-love, where one lets his passions control him and in the end is destroyed. Others seek by force of will to do what they think is right—to obey the dictates of their parents, the rules of their teachers, the teachings of the Bible—though meanwhile their hearts are rebellious. In all of these cases there is obedience to what one dislikes. But others there are who obey because of true love. This is natural obedience, the other unnatural.

One reason why some do not succeed in finding God nearest and dearest to them is because they try to love Him so that they may be blessed by Him. With some, religion is all business; the heart has nothing to do with it. To the extent that this is true it is a mockery.

I want to tell you what a beautiful Scotch writer, Rev. George Matheson, says of love's bondage:

"Have you ever felt what a compliment it is, when a man is possessed of any special virtue, to be able to say of him, 'he cannot help it'? To my mind it is the climax of all compliment. In the world of intellect every man would deem it so. What do we mean by that word 'genius'? Is it not simply that a man cannot help being great? He sings or paints, not because he can, but because he must; because there is within him the breath of inspiration which will not let him go until he has blessed the world. That is genius, the thing that all men reverence. They reverence the man be-

cause he cannot help it. He is dominated by a power higher than his own, and his crown is the fact of being conquered. Oh, thou divine Love, thou Genius of my heart! The moment thou comest I say, I cannot help it. And I feel that when this happens I am not poorer, but richer. I never conquer till I can fight no more. Come and conquer me, thou overmastering Love. My independence of thee is my night. I have the struggle of duty, and the struggle of conscience, and I often win. When I win I am proud of myself, for I feel how difficult it has been. But when thou shalt come, oh, Love! then there will be no difficulty. I shall be borne resistless in thy chariot. Thy charm shall be my chain."

We should have no need of *trying* to love God. His love, when you realize it, will draw out your love. Some see everything else but love in the life and death of Jesus. He was God in human flesh. His death was the complete unveiling of God's love. "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we

were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5: 8).

If you would know that there is a God to love, believe the words "God is love," and love Him. Then you will soon know it. Some try to know Him by a sort of faith which is only another name for credulity.

You need to see that the life I have been telling you about is the life to live, and believe that to live it is possible. Such love to God must be natural. To love Him with all the being must be to carry out the true promptings of your heart.

You need to be more capable of loving. You have little capacity, for your heart has grown unnatural. The world is wide: it is easy to put a few miles between yourself and others whom you

have loved. A few cross words, an unkind action, and you are separated. It is easy to get away from others; it is hard afterwards to get close to them. The saddest letters I have ever received came from persons wanting to love God and who had tried to do so in every way they knew of. Such persons say, "Oh, if I could only believe that He loves me! But I cannot." It is a fact all too true that many, deep down in their hearts, cannot seem to believe that God loves them.

How are you to love God? Put yourself within love's attraction. Put yourself where you can hear the "must" of love. Open the deaf ears to it. How shall you do this? Put yourself away from different attractions. Choose to do this with all your heart. Lay your love

at His feet. Believe that His love is true. Say with your heart, "I am yours." As you do this actively, and continuously, true love will begin to grow.

When you can say as Paul said, "I am determined not to know anything but Jesus" (1 Cor. 2: 2),—nothing but Him as Love—then you will soon know the heart of God in Jesus as all love toward you. When you can say with Paul again, "I count all things but loss * * that I may win Christ" (Phil. 3: 8), then you will win Him. But you must set your heart upon it, as you have set it upon things infinitely less worthy. Begin loving Him as the young man starts about winning his bride. Go with Him everywhere. Become acquainted with Him through every means. Learn

all you can about Him. Tell others what you learn.

"But would it not unfit me for everything else?" I hope so for awhile. You might become very sentimental. Perhaps you want a religion of action, not emotion. But is not one most active when most alive? Do you know of anything that puts life into a person as love does? Our lives are nothing to what they might be, for want of the exercise of love.

"But would I have time for anything else?" Yes, but it takes time to love God. You take time for rest, recreation and sleep; there is no rest like loving. It strengthens the soul and body. It is not work that kills, it is worry. Men are blaming God for their misery, yet all their misery comes from lack of love.

Love lightens the load in the home and out of it. It brings contentment. You do not worry about ways and means. What comes into your life pleases. All things are received as the best. Nothing seems common-place. Each hour brings some new surprise, some new lesson.

A want of loving trust complains of what God sends—as the children of Israel said when He lovingly cared for them in the wilderness,—"Our soul loatheth this light bread." But the spirit of love says, "Lord, evermore give us this bread."

Can you say these words: "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee"? (Ps. 73: 25). You would like to say them, but can you?

If you are truly to answer to the

"must" of love you must see that God is one like unto yourself. Only as He is like your true self can you love Him. You long to love one who is your perfect ideal. You long for companionship with one altogether lovely. There is within you a desire to rise to your highest ideal and to have the closest companionship with such a one.

Your life must ever move within a circle unless there is something above and beyond toward which it can advance. Perhaps you feel like the young eaglet brought up in captivity among the barnyard fowls—as though somehow your life was all wrong. At times you have caught a glimpse of a different life—one away from the clamor and gossip around you; out of the scratching and fighting for self, the picking and kicking at oth-

ers, the big ones crowing over the little ones. You feel that you can hold your own with the rest, and sometimes come out ahead in the fight, but each note of triumph you utter seems to choke you, every battle won for self seems won at the expense of self—a battle lost by your better nature. Sometimes there has crossed your vision one like unto yourself, but radiant with a different life. You thought you heard a familiar voice calling you to fly away and be at rest. Perhaps you tried to do so. You seemed to rise a little, but your wings were weak. When you looked about again you found yourself still with the others. Perhaps you heard them croaking as though you had tried to do something and failed. Perhaps you felt in pain, as though you had fallen. You

may have thought it a dream, but again you are attracted by the same vision, and this time the sky seems clear. There can be no mistake. It is the loving call of One like unto yourself, a call to a life of loving companionship with Him—to a life above the clouds. You want to fly. You must fly.

I see another picture. It is a ladder set up upon the earth. Its foot rests at your head; its top enters the sky. The clouds seem parted. Beyond is a city, and within it a throne. One upon it attracts all. Happy is every face about Him. But the distance seems great, the ladder frail. Yet now are seen shining ones going up and down upon it. How happily they glide! How their faces change as they climb, growing in brightness as they near the top! And He who

attracts all these attracts you also; the Voice upon the throne of love eternal is calling you to come, and you feel that you must obey. Everything you touch fades; even the granite of earth crumbles away; nothing seems to satisfy. Earth's foundations perish.

Again I see a vision. It is a city descending, a city that hath foundations in your heart and mine, for its builder and maker is God. It is the holy city, the City of Love made perfect; for as the love is perfect, so is the life. It is called the New Jerusalem. In this city will you awake when swallowed up in love to God. It is prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, and no love of human heart for earthly companion can compare with the glory of this City of Love. One upon the throne is the light of it. He at-

tracts all to Himself, for He is One like all —One like you and me. You feel that you belong with Him—close to Him. But your garments seem soiled, torn and unfit for companionship with Him, and you cry out, "Oh, when shall I awake in His likeness!" When, indeed? When the love is perfect.

Love's compelling call sounds at first faintly, then more loud and clear as you listen. Steel near the magnet feels attracted toward it; as it responds it is drawn rapidly. When in contact with the magnet the union is hard to sever.

If you have caught a glimpse of God, of His infinite love for you, then there is no rest away from Him, for you have tasted of the heavenly rest. There is no contentment here, for you have caught a glimpse of heaven. You see its treasure.

Your heart calls you where your treasure is. You have been dead, but now you feel alive. Before there was no pain; you did not care, for you were without feeling, but now you are alive and have an almost resistless longing to be where you belong. The heaven-life is the love-life. Why wait longer for it?

Perfect love unites completely. Where God and you are one, there is heaven. Have you tasted of the bread of heaven? Have you drunk of life's water? Then you have a soul-hunger and thirst which cannot be satisfied apart from God, for He is the bread and water of life. Away from Him you feel as a famished one. Your tongue is parched. You are tormented. The flames of an unsatisfied heart have wrapped themselves about you; its heated air is intolerable; you

long for the free air of the heaven-life. Where you are is a life of death—worse than death; it is a part of the second death, and you are within its shadow. You who were created in God's image, made in His very likeness, if away from Him are in torment. Sin, which is lack of love, is torment. Can you not realize this?

Do not try to get away from these words, "Thou shalt." Let them ring unceasingly in your ear. Yes, *you must.* You must because God wants the love of your whole being. I wish you could even half appreciate His loving call. I wish you could begin to fathom the love that uttered it. I wish you could truly hear it.

May the cadence of my text ever ring in your ears and mine, more and still

more sweet and forceful, until all within us is conquered by the "must" of love, and we are ONE with Him, and so too with others, in a love measureless and unending.

Lovingly yours,

David C. Cook

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